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Orchids

for the Amateur

as well as the

Commercial Grower

presented by

THE ORCHID HOUSE

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N EARLY EVERYONE who grows plants, at one time or another gets the urge to grow an orchid or two, and if they knew how easy it is to attain success in orchid culture there certainly would be many more persons growing the rather rugged plants both for pleasure (not any hobby holds as much interest) and for profit, since the initial cost is nearly the only expense. Some bloom twice a year and some of the florist's type, the *Cattleya* (pronounced "Catt'la-ya"), produce as many as seven flowers at one time. The plants, after attaining blooming size, with proper care will bloom at least once a year for many, many years and will increase in size as they grow older. Plants can be purchased as seedlings for as low as 25¢ each for plants nearly two years old. You can also purchase divisions of large plants and, of course, a large plant or so for occasional flowers to keep the interest up. Upkeep is small, since the plants require water only about once a week and the material in which they are potted, usually osmunda fern root fibre, must be renewed only about every two years.

The initial cost would be for a glass house of some sort with a heating arrangement, and some plants. The most generally accepted heat is gas which is thermostatically controlled and which is used to heat water piped under the benches in the greenhouse. All the orchids in our display will stand a minimum of about 50°, usually 55° at night. The temperature often rises to 100° in summer, when the heater can be turned off entirely. We usually turn the heater on about October 1st and turn it off in April or May.

Some method of shading should be used so that the plants will receive from 40% to 60% of full sunlight. This can be attained by using roller blinds, lath or by white-washing the glass or painting the glass with a very light coat of a mixture of white lead and kerosene.

The glass house should be provided with ventilation of some kind so that the plants are given fresh air but are not in a draft. This condition can be arrived at by placing a ventilator in the top of the house on the down-wind side or away from the prevailing wind.

The humidity necessary for successful orchid growing is usually arrived at by watering the plants when they dry out. Of course, this watering period would vary between localities on the coast where less watering is necessary. Because of the more arid condition in the inland areas, water will have to be given more often.

Automatic controls can be installed to raise and lower the ventilators and to control the heater and fan, where it is necessary to install one for cooling the house.

The following contains a few brief notes on the description, culture and price range of some of our more unusual orchids.

CYPRIPEDIUM INSIGNE is an evergreen plant with light green foliage, producing its flowers from the center of its growth, the flower stalks being about 10 inches high. The flowers have very good lasting qualities. Insigne is a most popular Cypripedium with amateurs as it is so easily grown and is so easy to flower. The plants bloom during the fall and winter months. They can be potted in Cymbidium compost. In fact, they may even be grown with the Cymbidiums, requiring a position where the pots can be well aerated and grown with generally a little more shade than Cymbidiums but cannot be dried out as much. *From \$3.50 up.*

LYCASTE SKINNERI is by far the most popular of the Lycast family. The height of the plant will vary from 15 to 24 inches. The flowers are large and handsome and, too, are variable: sepals white, more or less suffused with rose; petals smaller, usually marked with deep rose, and the lip is whitish, thickly spotted with rose and crimson. The plants bloom during the months of late autumn and early winter. *From \$3.50. up.*

VANDA ORCHIDS

With the increasing interest in Vanda orchids, caused no doubt by numerous blooms of this genera being flown in from Hawaii, where one form, the terete and semi-terete form, is grown out of doors in full sun, the question is raised again and again concerning these very fine and much misunderstood orchids. We would like to acquaint you with some of the most worth-while of the Vandas, which we will list with a brief description of each.

VANDA COERULEA grows on an erect stem up to four feet tall. It is truly the most magnificent of them all. The flowers range in color from white to deep blue and are three to four inches across, with six or more flowers on the spike. We grow ours near the glass, and feed by using well-rotted chicken manure. We also keep them somewhat drier in winter. *From \$5.00 bare root.*

VANDA HERZIANA is the resulting hybrid of V. coerulea crossed with V. suavis. It seems to take on the vigor and ease of flowering of V. suavis and the color of V. coerulea. We know of plants that had three spikes in September of last year, and the first of December were again making bud. This plant seems to thrive near the glass, where we splash it with water on bright, warm days and feed once a month when the days are warm and bright and the humidity high.

VANDA LUZONICA resembles V. suavis and V. tricolor in habit, although the roots are somewhat larger. There are usually up to 12 flowers to the spike, each flower measuring up to 3" across. They are very lovely, being pure white with crimson dots on the tips of the petals and minute red dots on the sepals. The lip is almost entirely crimson.

VANDA SANDERIANA is the "king" of them all. It grows from one to three feet tall, with leaves from 12 to 15 inches long, and has seven to 15 flowers to the spike. The flowers are large, nearly 5" across, and almost flat. The

upper sepal is a soft rose suffused with white; the lower two are larger and are a tawny-yellow, crossed and recrossed with prominent sanguineous-red veins. The petals are smaller than the sepals and are colored like the upper sepal but with a tawny-red blotch near the base. The lip is comparatively small but remarkable in structure. The basal half is concave, not spurred, and is a dull tawny-yellow streaked with red; the front part is bluntly cordate, recurved apically, colored chocolate-purple, with three prominent ridges. (Description taken from Sander's Orchid Guide.) It blooms late summer and winter. Although the plant has been actively collected recently in the jungles of Cotabato Province of Mindanao in the Philippines, it is still very scarce. *From \$20.00 up.*

VANDA SUAVIS is a fine species. It grows up to five feet tall, with leaves from 12 to 15 inches long. It has six to 14 flowers to the spike and the flowers measure two to three inches across and are fragrant. The sepals and petals are white, spotted and barred with purple, with a purplish suffusion. The lip is rose-purple. *V. suavis* is often taken for *V. tricolor*, which resembles this orchid and may be a form of *V. suavis*. The plants respond to feeding and should be splashed with water on bright, warm days. *From \$5.00 up.*

In addition to these and many others that are rare and unusual, we have many fine varieties of CATTLEYAS from one of the best orchid hybridists in America and from the oldest concerns in France and England.

In our stock of CYPRIPEDIUMS you will find many of the finest English hybrids, some that have been given the Award of Merit or F.C.C. Award in the Royal Horticultural Society. We received this year some 450 fine plants by air from England, among them fine, free-flowering, early-blooming reds such as we have in our display; whites (*Cypripedium Albion*, F.C.C. var., and *Cypripedium F. C. Puddle*) and many hothouse varieties; also large-flowering cool types.

Along with this shipment of *Cypripediums* we received a good-sized shipment of CYMBIDIUMS. The shipment included many large plants of *Cymbidium Dorchester* of selected varieties. The large quantity of the order enables us to sell these plants and the propagations from them at the lowest prices ever offered in this section of the country.

Almost monthly we receive importations from Hawaii and the Far East, where the rare and fine DENDROBIUMS and VANDAS originate.

We also stock ORCHID SUPPLIES for the amateur as well as the commercial grower. We are Southern California distributors for what is recognized to be one of the finest *orchid sprays* on the market today. We have what is considered by many to be the best *osmunda fibre* in this area, and at a very reasonable price. Also, we stock *Taylor thermometers* in four or five different sizes. For *Cymbidium* hobbyists — *Sudbury Soil Test kits*. For heating, we have heaters and thermostats and information for installing.

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